

# **NEW SHOREHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Block Island School**

**October 17, 2006**

**(Rescheduled from October 16, 2006)**

**7:00 P.M.**

**The New Shoreham School Committee met in open session on Tuesday, October 17, 2006, in the media center of the Block Island School. Chair William Padien called the meeting to order at 7:01 P.M. The following members were present: Shea Butcher, Annie Hall, Sean McGarry, William Padien, and Richard Tretheway. Leslie Ryan was also in attendance.**

## **Approval of Minutes**

**A motion (Hall, Butcher) to approve the minutes of the meetings held on September 19 and October 5, 2006, and the executive session minutes of September 19, 2006, as written carried with a vote of 4-0, with Richard Tretheway not in attendance.**

**A motion (Padien, Hall) to amend the agenda to address item 5B: Resolution for Employees Retirement System of Rhode Island after the fiscal report carried with a vote of 4-0, with Richard Tretheway not in attendance.**

## **Reports**

**Nancy Cole stated that Jeff Wadovick of Nadeau & Company is scheduled to begin the audit on Friday, October 20 and reminded the School Committee that the fiscal reports for August 31 and September 30, 2006, are drafts until the audit has been completed. Mrs. Cole pointed out that \$96,000 was budgeted for electricity, but with monthly bills hovering around \$10,000 we will be going over budget in that area. She also mentioned that so far this fiscal year we have not had to pay for ADP's services because of their mistakes on our tax obligations. Other budget departments seem to be right in line for this time of year.**

### **New Business**

**Information from the Employees' Retirement System of Rhode Island (ERSRI) regarding pre-tax contributions, a copy of the resolution signed by the Town Council at its meeting on June 28, 2006, a similar resolution written for School Committee approval, and information from the IRS explaining what actions are required to "pick up" employee contributions to a qualified plan were submitted for School Committee review. Town Finance Director Amy Lewis explained that New Shoreham was withholding and sending employee contributions to ERSRI incorrectly. This was discovered when ADP was hired to provide payroll services. Ms Lewis stated that the resolution is required by ERSRI to change the contribution tax status from post-tax to pre-tax, which means that employees would be taxed when they draw on retirement. Approving the resolution would bring the school department in line with the town. It was decided that the School**

**Committee would get an opinion from its attorney before signing the resolution. If a favorable opinion is received from the attorney, this item will be addressed at the next regular meeting.**

## **Reports**

**Annie Hall reported that she had attended an Early Learning Center meeting where fund raising was discussed. She also mentioned that they are looking for people who may be interested in serving as board members.**

**Sean McGarry reported that there will be a SORICO meeting on October 26, which he plans to attend on the mainland because he can not vote when attending via Polycom. There will also be a meeting on Monday, December 4 regarding RIDE's diploma system.**

**William Padien reported on the status of the addition/renovation project. The tech ed room is the one area not completed yet, and currently we are waiting for Howell Conant to give us a quote for the electrical work that needs to be done. He is aware that we would like to have that room finished as soon as possible. The curtains have arrived for the music room and the remainder of the sound panels will be installed soon. There has been a request for equipment storage, but that will have to be purchased with money from the school's budget, not the construction budget. Several items remain on the punch list and Mr. Padien is not sure when these will be completed. The only item remaining on the parking lot is the ADA required ramp from the lot to the sidewalk. Joe Sprague is aware that this needs to**

be done before we can receive a complete CO. The outdoor basketball stanchions have arrived and Mr. Sprague will install them free of charge. Mr. Padien also reported that the hot water problems as listed in a report from Everett Littlefield will be addressed.

A motion (Padien, Hall) to recommend to the Town Council to approve the payment of invoice #25 from Saccoccio & Associates in the amount of \$4,885.18 for work completed in July carried with a vote of 4-1, with Sean McGarry voting in the negative.

Marlee Lacoste reported on the following:

- The quarterly Progress Reports were sent home last week.
  - This is the third week of the annual state assessment for grades 3-8 using the NECAP test. Grade 11 will be doing a three-day NECAP pilot test in November. The PSATs will be administered to students in grades 10 and 11 on Wednesday, October 18.
  - The six seniors enjoyed Block Island Maritime Institute's annual day of sailing aboard the Ruling Passions.
  - A Back to School Night, which included a tour of the school, was held on September 27 and was well attended.
  - David Coyle, an entomologist from Nebraska, visited the Field Biology and middle grade science classes on September 28. This visit was arranged by Shannon Cotter.
  - Nancy Strickland, an admissions advisor from URI, spoke to students in grades 10-12 on October 5 about the admissions process.
- Sue Gibbons and Joanne Warfel took nine students to the College

**Fair at CCRI on Sunday, October 15, where they had a chance to see and gather information from over 100 colleges and universities. David Stephenson them there. A Financial Aid Night, presented by the College Planning Services, is scheduled for November 16.**

- Parents of high school students received flyers about the PSAT/SAT strategy and practice sessions and the Homework Helpline, which meets Mondays-Thursdays.**

- The ninth grade Humanities class joined the Recreation Department's trip to the RISD Museum on October 5. The second grade went to Parker Woodland on October 10 to learn about Native American Culture. Upcoming field trips include a visit to Schartner Farms by the first grade, Roger Williams Zoo by third grade, and the State House and Slater Mill by the fourth grade. These trips enhance the units being taught in those classes.**

- The student council is meeting on Wednesdays during lunch in Mr. Young's room.**

- Members of the Block Island Fire Department spoke to elementary students about fire safety on October 13. They demonstrated what a firefighter in full turnout gear looks like and explained that they should not hide from firefighters if they were ever caught in a fire.**

**Mrs. Ryan reported that she had attended the Governor's Safe Schools Summit on Tuesday, October 10 and she is currently working with the New Shoreham Police Department to develop preventive ideas and also to put a plan in place in response to an intrusion in our building. She would like to meet with the high school students at two**

different times. The first meeting would be with the teachers; the second would include members of the police department. She would like the students to know that we are taking this issue very seriously.

Mrs. Ryan stated that the Academic Action Plan was initiated when progress reports were sent home to parents last week. Several parents, whose children are in danger of failing a course, have contacted the necessary teachers.

Mrs. Ryan reported that on Saturday, October 14 a group of administrators from the course she is taking came to visit the school. They were all impressed with our state of the art facility. Mrs. Ryan thanked Mrs. Lacoste for her willingness to lead the tour of the building.

Mrs. Ryan reported that the Block Island School students did very well on the 2005 NECAP tests, which included reading, mathematics, and writing. The mean scores for our students were higher than the state average. She expects our students to continue to do well on the 2006 tests.

A motion (Padien, Butcher) to amend the agenda to address item 5E: Request to Home School next followed by item 4D: Amendment(s) to Bus Contract carried with a vote of 5-0.

## **New Business**

**A request was received from John and Kerri Spier to home school their children (David, Samuel, and Selena) from December 2006 through June 2007. Mrs. Spier met with Mrs. Lacoste and submitted information on the curriculum they plan to follow for each child. A motion (Tretheway, Butcher) to approve the request of John and Kerri Spier to home school their children from December 2006 through June 2007 carried with a vote of 5-0.**

## **Old Business**

**A revised bus contract was received from Sandra Rice requesting an additional \$23,000 for the 2006-07 school year to provide a second bus to accommodate the increase in student riders. Mr. Padien was hoping to find some creative way of paying for the additional bus without depleting the entire fund balance, but was told by the auditor that the money could not come from next year's budget. Mr. Rice agreed to accept \$47,000 instead of the requested \$50,000. A motion (Padien, Butcher) to revise the bus contract to add an additional \$20,000 for this year to cover the cost of the second bus (total of \$47,000 for 2006-07 school year) and to include a back-up plan where all students would take one bus with every effort being made to contact the parents if one bus is out of service carried with a vote of 4-1, with Sean McGarry voting in the negative. The School Committee thanked Mr. & Mrs. Rice for their willingness to compromise.**

**Mrs. Ryan recommended that no changes be made to Policy ID:**

**Extra-Curricular/Athletic Participation for this academic year. However, she would like to revisit this policy in the spring so changes can be made which would be in effect for next school year. A lengthy discussion ensued, but committee members agreed to keep the policy as is for now. Mr. Padien suggested that the policy be amended and addressed at the March meeting so that it can be in place for the 2007-08 school year. In the meantime parents should be given the information on the policy and the procedures now in place to help students who may be in danger of failing. It was noted that parents may ask for weekly progress reports if they feel it would help.**

**Mrs. Ryan reported that she had received an e-mail from the Secondary Coordinator listing six items of concern voiced by the teachers regarding site based management: They are happy with the status quo, but feel that accountability and communication could be improved; they feel the work they did on site based management has been disregarded; they have severe doubts about the ability to hire and retain a good, full-time principal; they expressed misgivings about potential autocratic, hard-handed school administrators; they doubt efforts to select staff for an advisory team will come to fruition without stipends; and if the system fails the School Committee should not expect teachers to pick up the management slack as in the past without considerable increases in stipends. These items were addressed by the School Committee and the general feeling was that some of the teachers' concerns were contrary to what the committee is trying to accomplish with a change in the management structure.**



The committee is not planning to change the philosophy of the school or look for a “top down” or autocratic administrator, but would try to find someone who fits our philosophy. Mr. Padien wanted to approve the flow chart of the internal management structure he created, but it was stated that several teachers had not been at the meeting where it was first presented and they would like a chance to review it before it was approved. Mr. McGarry felt the committee should send the letter drafted by Attorney Myers regarding the dissolution of site based management before approving a flow chart. However, it was felt that the committee hadn’t had a chance to discuss the letter and it contained some incorrect information. A motion (McGarry, Hall) to approve and sign the letter to the New Shoreham Teachers’ Association that was drafted by the attorney regarding the dissolution of site based management was defeated with a vote of 1-4, with Shea Butcher, Annie Hall, William Padien, and Richard Tretheway voting in the negative.

A motion (Padien, Hall) to table agenda item 4C Appointment of School Improvement Team Members carried with a vote of 5-0.

### **New Business**

Mrs. Ryan reported that a committee (Marlee Lacoste, Sean McGarry, Tom Mitchell, Donna Ortelli, and Leslie Ryan) interviewed two candidates for the Athletic Director position and Matthew Moran was the committee’s first choice. A motion (Hall, Tretheway) to consent to the appointment of Matthew Moran as the Athletic Director carried

with a vote of 3-2, with Sean McGarry and William Padien voting in the negative. Mr. Moran will be compensated according to the Athletic Compensation Policy, currently \$3330 (pro-rated).

Information was received from the Technology Committee recommending that the school pursue an arrangement with the North Kingstown School Department to provide a variety of technology services for the Block Island School, including professional development and completing the quarterly reports for RIDE on student demographics. In addition, it was recommended that Hank Woodward or John Barry be appointed as an on-site technology person to be responsible for repairing hardware, trouble shooting, and dealing with software issues. John Warfel feels that it may take a little time to negotiate a contract with North Kingstown, but currently they provide services to the Jamestown School Department on a per pupil rate. It was suggested that the next step would be for Mrs. Ryan to contact the North Kingstown Technology Director.

The resolution adopted to establish the previous superintendent search committee was submitted for School Committee information. It was decided that the resolution be updated and included on next month's agenda. In the meantime, committee members should submit names of community members who may be interested in serving on the search committee.

**Calendar of Events**

**A calendar of events for October and November was submitted for School Committee information.**

### **Correspondence**

**Various pieces of correspondence were submitted for School Committee information, including a letter from Jack Lyle regarding his request for additional compensation. It was stated that this request had been forwarded to the attorney.**

### **Executive Session**

**A motion (Padien, Hall) at 10:35 P.M. to go into executive session pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws 42-46-4, 5(a)(2) for contract negotiations carried with a vote of 5-0.**

### **Open Session**

**A motion (Padien, Hall) at 10:41 P.M. to return to open session carried with a vote of 5-0.**

**A motion (Hall, Butcher) to approve the contract between the School Committee and Leslie Ryan and have Bill Padien sign as required carried with a vote of 5-0.**

### **Adjournment**

**A motion (Hall, Padien) at 10:44 PM to adjourn carried with a vote of 5-0.**

**Marsha L. Gutierrez, Clerk**

**Date approved: 11/20/2006**